demand, improve infrastructure base, upgrade technology, introduce labour flexibility and encourage FDI flows. Some of the initiatives taken recently are mentioned below:

- Basic customs duty in case of raw materials and intermediate goods has been reduced.
- Excise duty has been rationalized, with one rate of Cenvat and one rate of Special Excise duty (SED).
- Budgetary provisions under Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) have been raised to speed up the modernization of textile industry.
- Interest rate on small savings has been reduced leading to a reduction of the interest rate structure.
- RBI has reduced Cash Reserve Ratio and Bank Rate to increase liquidity and reduce the lending cost. *
- Public spending out of the current budgetary allocations has been stepped up.
- Proposals have also been made for suitable legislative changes to improve the operating environment for industry.

Issues to be raised at WTO talks at Doha

192. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the next round of talks under World Trade Organisation is going to be held in Doha (Qatar) in November, 2001;

(b) whether Government propose to raise the issue of adverse provision in the WTO agreement; and

(c) the details of issues Government propose to raise at the next round of WTO talks at Doha in November, 2001?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) The Fourth Ministerial Conference of WTO is scheduled to be held from 9th—13th November, 2001 at Doha, Qatar.

(b) and (c) the main issue which Government propose to raise

relates to the difficulties experienced by developing countries in implementing the Uruguay Round of Agreements. These concerns which have come to be known as "Implementation Issues", fall broadly into three categories. The first category is the imbalances and asymmetries inherent in some of the Uruguay Round Agreements. The second category is the lack of sincere implementation of various provisions of the WTO agreements by the developed countries. The third category relates to the non-implementation of special and differential clauses contained in various agreements in favour of developing countries. As a result of these difficulties, the market access gains expected by developing countries from the Uruguay Round of Agreements have not materialized.

India alongwith some like minded group of countries had submitted proposals for the upfront redressal of the various "Implementation Related Concerns" of the developing countries without linking them to any fresh round of negotiations. India alongwith other like minded group of countries proposes to press for the Ministerial Conference at Doha to take all decisions as may be necessary for the resolution of the "Implementation Related Concerns" of the developing countries.

Special aid to fruit producing States

193. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Governments of Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and others rich in producing considerable amount of exportable fruits have protested to Central Government against the lifting of Quantitative Restrictions on fruit imports;

(b) if so, what facilities and special aid have been sought by these State Governments to help farmers growing and exporting fruit and fruit products to meet the world competition; and

(c) what is Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI **MURASOLI MARAN):** (a) There were some representations from